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DEPARTMENT FOR AF A/S FRAZER, AF S/E WILLIAMSON, AF/C AND AF/SPG
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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [UN](#) [AU](#) [CD](#) [SU](#)

SUBJECT: DAUSA DEBY IMPLIES MORE DIRECT CHADIAN ROLE IN SOLVING DARFUR CONFLICT, FOR A PRICE

CLASSIFIED BY CDA LUCY TAMLYN FOR REASONS 1.4(B) AND (D)

REF: NDJAMENA 126
NDJAMENA 117
NDJAMENA 122
NDJAMENA 123

Summary

¶1. (C) The international community is ill-suited to mediate the Darfur conflict without the assistance of the Chadian Government, Dausa Deby, the influential half brother of President Idriss Deby and long-time interlocutor with Darfur's rebel movements, told Poloff. Recalling Chad's success in brokering the N'djamena Ceasefire Agreement in 2004, Deby said that informal talks involving a seasoned mediator with historical contacts with the parties are the most effective method for achieving a political settlement. During an earlier meeting, a close associate of Dausa Deby's said that Chad is willing to help the international community resolve the Darfur conflict in exchange for more robust international efforts--particularly from the U.S.--to address Chad-Sudan tensions and the threat Chadian rebels pose to the Chadian Government. End summary.

Managing Monsters

¶2. (C) During a meeting with Poloff on March 31, Dausa Deby, President Idriss Deby's half brother and a long-time interlocutor with the Darfur rebel movements, criticized the international community's lack of understanding of regional dynamics and doubted that the UN, AU or any Western state alone will be able to broker a peace agreement between the Darfur rebel factions and the Sudanese Government. Acknowledging that the Chadian Government had "created monsters that are now out of control" through its support of the movements, Deby nonetheless remained confident that an appropriate mediation team could bring the parties to political settlement.

¶3. (C) Deby intimated that Chad maintains significant leverage over the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) and other movements, which it is willing to use if a proper structure for its involvement is established. Lauding the N'djamena Ceasefire Agreement of 2004 as the only agreement to involve all of the Sudanese parties, he asserted that

Chad's intimate understanding of the political climate in Sudan and Darfur makes it well placed to broker a future accord. "The largest error we made was letting the venue of the last negotiations shift to Abuja under the AU," said Deby. "What we accomplished in N'djamena--with Chad in the lead and supported by international diplomats in N'djamena--should be the model."

¶ 14. (C) Underscoring that he has personal relationships with all of the rebel leaders and first-hand knowledge of the "geography of Darfur," Deby explained, "we know how to sit under the trees and convince them (the rebels) to negotiate." According to him, formal talks at a negotiating table--along the lines of Abuja--are unnecessary with the right mediators in place.

Why Not Start with JEM?

¶ 15. (C) In reference to JEM's recent call for a joint UN/AU mediation led by former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, Deby suggested that Annan work with President Deby to facilitate negotiations. Any mediation should take advantage of JEM chairman Khalil Ibrahim's current position that he negotiate directly with Sudan, excluding the factions of the Sudan Liberation Army (SLA). "Start with him, and others will fall into place," said Deby. He inferred that, as the SLA factions see JEM negotiating with Sudan, it will energize their efforts at consolidation, which have been encouraged by the Chadian government (reflets).

¶ 16. (C) Though recognizing that many of Ibrahim's demands--

NDJAMENA 00000127 002 OF 002

as well as those of SLA leader Abdulwahid al Nur--are unrealistic, Deby explained that the purpose of a negotiating track is for both sides to compromise and that Chad's unique position makes it able to manage these discussions. He claimed that Ibrahim is aware that his goal of regime change in Khartoum is unfeasible and is only using statements to that effect as a negotiating tactic.

Goal: Prepare Darfur Movements for Democracy

¶ 17. (C) The goal of any political process, said Deby, should be to prepare the movements for participation in a democratic process that ends Sudan's attempts to dominate the region through its pan-Arab and Islamist ideology. He cast doubt, however, on the likelihood of political transformation occurring according to the timeline set out in the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), pointing to the lack of security in Darfur and the absence of true international pressure to "force" Khartoum to accept the rapid and effective deployment of the UN-AU Mission in Darfur.

¶ 18. (C) Poloff pointed out that free and fair elections have been held successfully in more insecure environments than Darfur, such as Iraq. Deby responded that the level of political development in Darfur that is necessary for true elections could not occur in the current security climate. Poloff asked whether the international community should therefore focus all of its attention on the peacekeeping force rather than the political process. Deby said that "preparing the movements for peace" could be done in parallel to UNAMID deployment but only by the right mediators.

Comment

¶9. (C) Musa Ahmet Oumar, a close associate of Deby who arranged the meeting (Ref. A), told Poloff on March 29 that Chad is willing to help the international community resolve the Darfur conflict in exchange for more robust international efforts--particularly from the U.S.--to address Chad-Sudan tensions and the threat Chadian rebels pose to the Chadian Government. Deby was not as explicit during the meeting, appearing measured, patient, and resigned to the difficult road ahead for both Chad and Darfur--and emphasizing the "informal" nature of the conversation. However, he did note that Sudan would not welcome a direct Chadian role in negotiations given the state of Sudan-Chad relations and implied that if outside actors helped to institute a workable rapprochement between the two countries--and remove the threat to the Chadian Government--N'djamena is willing to play a more constructive role in Darfur. As if to underscore Chad's influence on the rebel movements, SLA/Unity leader Suleiman Jamous, URF leader Bahar Idriss Abu Gharda, and Chadian Presidential Advisor Tahir Gassey (who is often mentioned as another channel from President Deby to the Darfur movements) drifted casually in and out of Deby's house throughout the meeting. End comment.

¶10. (U) Tripoli minimize considered.

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